

Church unity *file*

Church Union News and Views

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Organ of the Continuation Committee  
of the  
South India Joint Committee on Union



Vol. II

JANUARY 1932

No. 4

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THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY FOR INDIA

Post Box 501, Park Town, Madras

1932

# THE Christian Literature Society for India

POST BOX 501, PARK TOWN, MADRAS.

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The Christian Literature Society take pleasure in announcing that the Tamil and Telugu Editions of the Scheme of Union are now available at 4 annas per copy subject to the usual 25% discount to Missionaries and Ministers. Postage extra. They also wish to announce that the Tamil and Telugu editions of the 'Scheme of Union Explained' may now be obtained at the reduced price of 2 annas a copy nett.

## SPECIAL INTERCESSION AND PRAYERS FOR UNITY

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# CHURCH UNION

## News and Views

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THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY, PARK TOWN, MADRAS.

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**Vol. II**

**JANUARY 1932**

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## Editorials

### **Prayer for the General Council and Episcopal Synod**

The General Council and the Episcopal Synod of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon will meet in Calcutta early in February, 1932. Among other business there will come before them for consideration the question of the 'Proposed Scheme of Union in South India'. These bodies will be asked the question as to whether they are prepared to give general approval to this Scheme of Union or not. Other questions related to this movement will also be before the General Council and Synod. Hence it is appropriate that all those who are interested in the Kingdom of God should earnestly pray that the bishops and other clergy and laymen of this Church shall be rightly guided in all their deliberations and decisions. Our prayer should be that the Holy Spirit Himself may

be present at these meetings and that He may reveal the will of God to the members of these bodies and lead them all to be willing to do what is manifestly God's will.

## Christianity Must Solve Sectarianism

It was in the Indian Christian Conference held in Bangalore some years ago that the late Mr. K. T. Paul placed before his Christian brethren the proposition that it was their duty as well as privilege in India to work for the solution of India's communal differences. At the Round Table Conference also Mr. Paul made that his great contribution, not asking for communal representation for those whom he represented but offering to all the friendliness and the fairness of Christianity in the great problem of the solution of these difficulties.

It is not merely our duty to talk about these things. It is our duty actually to do them. But we all will realise at once that we cannot get far until we have solved our own denominational differences. A divided Christianity cannot solve the world's political, economic, and educational differences, but a united Church would be potent to do all these things. Christ must be the solvent. His followers must apply that solvent to the world's problems. But they cannot do it until they have proved to the world that their own differences have been solved.

## The Method of Christ

The Rev. P. B. Clayton (Founder Padre of Toc H) spoke as follows at a recent meeting :—

'We shall be gravely guilty if we spurn the ways of Christian work and of Christian worship which we ourselves have not experienced. The need today is neither solely for tradition, nor solely for experiment; both must be balanced in a faithful ministry. Surely no man can hold that methods which failed to Christianize a mediæval age are likely now to win the world of men; but no man, however modern, can be so stupid as to regard the witness of the past as unimportant. Out of the treasure house of Christian history we must with reverence draw the deep solemnities; but we must recognise that man is on the march, and that the methods of our ministry must never halt behind him. To worship ancient nets will never mend them.'

In these words Mr. Clayton lays down a great fundamental principle. It is certainly true that the *methods which failed to Christianize a mediæval age are unlikely now to win the world of men*. It is true this world has changed a great deal since mediæval times, but nevertheless there is much in common between us and those ages which would certainly make



it probable for anything that failed them to fail now. Each age must produce its own methods and consequently to appeal alone to history is fatal. History and experiment must constantly be united in order that we *may make history* instead of merely following it.

## Our Angle of Vision

Many people are opposed to the movement for Church Union simply because they have never been able to get outside of themselves and look at things from their Christian brother's standpoint. To be satisfied with one's own Church and one's own environment does not prove that others who will not unite with you are guilty of schism. A Wesleyan may be quite content with his Church life and wonder why a Baptist will not worship with him. But that does not prove the Baptist wrong. An Anglican may be perfectly happy and conscientiously satisfied in his own Church and therefore think the Congregationalist is all wrong, but that does not prove him wrong. Until we have done our very best to see things from our brother's angle we have no right to condemn the brother. We all need to study and think and to pray together. In the presence of the Holy Spirit we shall probably find the better way when we shall all look at these things from the angle of Jesus Christ and not from the angle of some part of His Church.

The question may be asked 'who wants union'? The answer is not he who wants all men to become like himself, but he who wants himself as well as all men to be like Jesus Christ. Our union must centre in Him and not in our own past history. The living Christ of today must be our rallying point.

## Lausanne, 1937

In view of the responses from the Churches, the Continuation Committee at its meeting August 18-21, 1931, voted unanimously to convene a second World Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne, Switzerland, in August 1937. The Committee has provisionally decided that the general subject of the Conference of 1937 shall be 'The Church in the Purpose of God'. The list of subheadings in the present preliminary draft of the programme is as follows:—

1. The Church and the Word.
2. The Church and the World.
3. The Meaning of Grace:

(a) Grace and the Church.

(b) Grace and the Ministry.

(c) Grace and the Sacraments.

4. The Church's fellowship in life and worship :

- (a) The life of the Church as expressed in the Holy Communion.
- (b) The Communion of Saints.
- (c) The Church and the Churches : including such questions as those affecting Intercommunion, Federation, etc.

The Committee regards this list as subject to free modification in the light of suggestions either from the Churches or from national or confessional groups of those interested in the movement. Such suggestions should be addressed to the Very Rev. H. N. Bate, M.A., The Deanery, Hadleigh, Suffolk, England, for the Committee of Reference.

## Prayer for Church Union

In connection with the World's Y.M.C.A. Week of Prayer a meeting for prayer for Church Union was held on Friday, 13th November, at the Bourdillon Y.M.C.A., Infantry Road, Bangalore, when the special subjects for prayers were for the Church of Christ in India and for all endeavours towards unity in the Church. The Rev. W. J. Lewis, Wesleyan Chaplain, presided, and the Rev. J. Koilpillai of St. Paul's Church gave an address in Tamil with reference to the negotiations that had been going on for some time among leaders in the Churches to promote union in South India. He was followed by the Rev. J. A. Jacob of the United Theological College, who, in addressing the audience in English, spoke enthusiastically of the necessity and value of union for the Indian Churches and the need for a speedy accomplishment of such union. After a service of prayer the Chairman concluded with the Benediction. The audience included clerical and lay representatives of the Anglican, Scotch, Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist Episcopal and Wesleyan Methodist Churches in Bangalore.

## Evangelical Unity

The French and German friends whom Pastor J. Rambaud brought together at Montbéliard from the 10th to the 15th of September were given the opportunity to exchange their views in regard to the fundamental problems of faith and life, in the light of evangelical unity and Christian reconciliation. The present economic and moral crisis lent a very special aspect to this meeting. The question of the masses which are drawing more and more away from God was especially discussed. Bolshevism and its campaign against religion was seriously considered. In the presence of the strong movement for secularisation which has grown to such great proportions in Russia and which is likewise making progress in all



lands, the Christians from France as well as from Germany were strongly of the opinion that one of the necessities of today is a strong and united faith. It is not an easy task to eliminate completely certain obstacles which unavoidably arise between the Christians of these two countries, but in the free discussions and in common prayer the participants experienced a real feeling of unity, a feeling which was strengthened still more at the Holy Communion Table. This work of reconciliation which is especially manifest during such conferences, is being carried on more quietly the whole year through.

(Information Service, Y.M.C.A.)

## The Christian College in India

The following extract is taken from the Lindsay Commission Report :  
Alongside the developments in autonomy is a tide setting in toward organic union of separate denominational bodies. India leads the world in this matter of Church union. Where else have negotiations for organic union between Anglicans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Wesleyans progressed so far as in the matter of the proposed union of the South India United Church with the Church in the Provinces of India, Burma, and Ceylon and the Wesleyan Methodist Church? Where else have Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Methodists gone so far along the road towards union as in North India? In the former case, negotiations have progressed so far that it is almost inconceivable that organic union should not result in the near future; in the latter, the preliminary stages of friendly gesture and desire have been passed and the second phase of serious conference entered upon. These great movements toward union, involving the largest Christian bodies in India, are full of significance not merely for the whole Christian world but especially for the future of Christianity in India. They signify impatience with western religious divisions that have no meaning for India and a determination on the part of Indian Christians that the Christian voice shall as far as possible be no Babel of strange tongues but a clear, strong, convincing, and unified word backed by the full force of Christian peoples living together in brotherly love.

This spirit of willingness to push co-operation to its fullest possible extent is of immense significance to the possibilities of Christian higher education in India, especially since the movements toward union do not imply loss of any intrinsic or valuable features of denominational life, but rather attempt to conserve for the benefit of all what has proved inspiring and precious to each.

## A Correction

In the November number of *Church Union News and Views* the Rev. M. B. Taylor was credited with the translation of the 'Proposed Scheme of Union' into Tamil. It was the Rev. M. S. Taylor of the Madura Church Council to whom this credit is due. We are sorry for the mistake.

## The Nagpur Conference

The value of meeting together for consultation and prayer as a method for promoting Church Union has again been vindicated in a conference that was held in Nagpur on November 7-9, 1931. Five representatives from South India met together with five representatives from North India for three days in intimate Christian fellowship. There were great difficulties to be overcome. Ten years of correspondence would never have accomplished what was done in the three days of fellowship and as a result we have the report of this group which appears in this number of *Church Union News and Views*. This conference was the first step and is by no means the end of the journey. But we confidently believe that, since the journey has been begun under such friendly fellowship, those who must make the journey will continue it until the goal is reached. We must always determine that our fellowship with God shall not be broken and that nothing shall discontinue our friendship with one another. Frank, cordial, loving friendship in this great task will help us to surmount all difficulties, especially when we are led by the Spirit of God.

## Episcopacy Today

Some time ago the Editor of *The Christian Century* of Chicago wrote an editorial on the subject, 'Keep the Episcopalians In'. He urged the inclusion of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States in any scheme of union for that country. He also said that if called on to do so he felt he could make out a good case for adopting episcopacy for any scheme of union on its own merits as the best system of Church government for our age.

Having that article in mind we asked the Lord Bishop of Gloucester (Dr. A. C. Headlam) to write an article on this subject showing why, quite apart from history and doctrine, the united Church of the future should adopt the episcopal form of government. We are greatly honoured by having the Bishop's thoughtful article for publication in this number and commend it to you for careful reading and consideration.



## Articles

### All-India Conference on Church Union Held in Nagpur, November 7th—9th, 1931

This Conference was held in accordance with a Resolution passed by The Round Table Conference on Church Union held in Delhi, November 18th-20th, 1930,\* requesting The South India Joint Committee on Church Union 'to consider the proposal that there shall be a Conference in which representatives of both South India and North India may consider together the principles that should be adopted in the formation of a united Church for India.' This request having been approved, the Continuation Committees of the two bodies concerned appointed delegates to attend the proposed Conference. The following were present :—

#### Representing North India

Miss E. M. Backhouse of The Society of Friends,  
Rev. John Drake of The Baptist Churches associated with The English Baptist Missionary Society,  
Rev. J. F. Edwards of The Wesleyan Methodist Church (also representing The United Church of Northern India),  
Rev. Canon W. E. S. Holland of The Church of India, Burmah and Ceylon,  
Rev. Dr. A. A. Parker of The Methodist Episcopal Church,  
Rev. Dr. Yohan Masih of The United Church of Northern India was elected a delegate but was unable to be present.

#### Representing South India

Right Rev. V. S. Azariah, Bishop of Dornakal, of The Church of India, Burmah and Ceylon,  
Rev. Dr. John J. Banning of The South India United Church,  
Rev. H. Gulliford of The Wesleyan Methodist Church,  
C. J. Lucas, Esq., of The South India United Church,  
Right Rev. E. H. M. Waller, Bishop of Madras, of The Church of India, Burmah and Ceylon.

\* The Communions represented at The Delhi Round Table Conference were :—

The Australian Methodist Church.  
The Baptist Churches associated with The English Baptist Missionary Society.  
The Church of The Brethren.  
The Church of India, Burmah and Ceylon.  
The Methodist Episcopal Church.  
The Society of Friends.  
The United Church of Northern India.  
The Wesleyan Methodist Church.

Visitors from The United Presbyterian Mission of the Punjab were also present unofficially.

The Conference elected the following officers:—

Chairman ... The Bishop of Dornakal,

Secretaries ... Rev. John J. Banninga, Rev. John Drake.

The Conference unanimously adopted the following Report of its proceedings:—

This Conference of members of Churches in North and South India appointed to 'consider the principles that should be accepted in the formation of a united Church for India' records the following Resolutions:—

1. That in Christ individual Christians in the various Churches in this land are already joined together in faith and experience.

2. That, since the barriers that keep the members of the various Churches from a fuller and more effective realisation of their essential unity are the result of the conflicting types of Church polity that have grown up in the west, it is imperative that these differences should not be perpetuated in India.

3. That the present situation constitutes a call to earnest prayer for unity and for God's guidance and blessing in all efforts to promote union, to the end that the Church in India, realising that Christ is the Head of His Church, ever supplying new energy and wisdom by the Holy Spirit, may bear victorious witness to the saving grace of God and thereby hasten the coming of His Kingdom in this land.

4. That, in order to promote the cause of union, the Conference urges:—

(a) That definite steps be taken to associate members of the various Churches in united evangelistic efforts and other forms of Christian service.

(b) That, since such co-operation will reveal the need for closer association in worship, the Churches should give opportunity for, and make every endeavour to promote, common acts of worship, including the partaking together of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

(c) That a definite system of commendation of members, applicable to all Churches, be devised, whereby the members of any Church, owing to change of residence, may not drift away from Christian worship and fellowship.

(d) That definite opportunities be provided for the interchange of ministries in the preaching of the Word and other forms of service, in order that all the Churches may share the gifts of the Spirit which have been so abundantly manifested in the ministries of the various Churches.

(e) That, inasmuch as the present restrictions to Christian fellowship largely arise from different conceptions of the ministry, and it is only by a solution of this problem that the Church



can be united, it is essential that the question of the unification of the ministry be examined and agreement reached regarding principles of Church organisation and government.

5. That, with regard to the type of organisation that may ultimately prove acceptable for a united Church in India, the Conference records its opinion that this would be found through the general adoption of a constitutional episcopate responsible to representative assemblies and synods, in a form that would comprehend, as far as practicable, the advantages of the episcopal, presbyterian and congregational modes of government.

6. In Resolution No. 5 the phrase 'a constitutional episcopate' is not used as a synonym for *the historic episcopate*. There are Churches in India which are by no means ready to accept the latter phrase or its supposed implications. On the other hand, there are some who value the phrase, *the historic episcopate*, as expressing their belief in the necessity for securing continuity with the ministry of existing episcopal Churches.

While The Joint Committee of South India has found it possible to adopt the phrase on the distinct understanding that no doctrinal implications of apostolic succession, sacerdotalism, or the three Orders of the ministry are implied by its use, it is still possible that a further solution of the problem may be found. The Conference therefore considers that no such initial difficulty should be allowed to prevent the various churches from discussing the problem and working for union. It believes that no church ought to demand the abandonment of a doctrine held in another Church as a preliminary to such discussions. No union can hope to be successful where conscientious beliefs are stifled. A united Church must aim at inclusion, not exclusion. The existence of the difficulty constitutes an added call to prayer.

7. God wills unity. Jesus Christ prayed for unity. The Holy Spirit urges us to unity. The Conference therefore concludes these resolutions by calling once more upon all Churches that constant prayer be made for the consummation of His purpose in and through all negotiations for Church union in India.

JOHN J. BANNINGA,  
JOHN DRAKE,

*Secretaries.*

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## The Value of Episcopacy in the Twentieth Century

I have been asked to express my opinion of the value of Episcopacy. It has been suggested that those who are in favour of it do not recommend it for any intrinsic merits that it possesses, but on historical and dogmatic

grounds, and that as a matter of fact it does not represent anything which is particularly useful at the present day. I believe such an opinion to be entirely erroneous. It is quite true that there are certain historical and possibly dogmatic arguments which have been used in favour of Episcopacy, but they, I believe, ultimately go back to utilitarian considerations which have prevailed in former periods of history; but in any case these arguments alone would not be sufficient to justify a strong defence of this form of Church government. I certainly should not be inclined to support it if I thought that it was only an interesting piece of antiquarianism. On the contrary, all my experience and observation would lead me to emphasise its extraordinary value for the efficiency of the Church in our own times. I feel strengthened in that belief by the evidence that I have had of the need experienced in other countries—such as Germany, where there is a strong movement for some form of Episcopal government. It is felt there how weak the disestablished Churches are in the face of many hostile movements without the support of a strong and efficient organisation.

It is then as a form of polity efficient, practical and eminently suited to the present century that I would speak of Episcopacy;—I would add particularly adapted to the needs of a Missionary Church.

## I

Let us be quite clear, to begin with, what Episcopacy means, for it does not merely consist in the government of the Church by men called Bishops.

1. It means, first of all, that the ministry of the Church should be that of Bishops, Presbyters (or Priests) and Deacons. We are not now concerned with the antiquarian side of things or the historical process of development of the Christian Ministry. We are concerned now with that ministry in its developed form as it is or should be.

The Deacons, for example, were those responsible for financial and material affairs. They administered relief, they had the care of the cemeteries and Churches. Their duty was 'to serve tables', the task for which the Seven were originally appointed. In some ways they were almost the most important offices in the Church. These particular functions have passed away but the office is now of value (and might I believe be of greater value) as providing a period of training and preparation for the higher offices of the Church. It is in many Churches difficult on economic grounds to devote a sufficient amount of time for training for the ministry. If the students of Theology during the last year or two years of their training were ordained as Deacons and regularly employed in ministerial work, it might serve to add one or two much-needed years to the period of theological and practical instruction.



I have only given this as an illustration of the way in which an office which had another origin is adapted to the needs of our time. What I wish to emphasise is that the Christian ministry that I wish to commend consist of the Bishop, who is the chief Pastor, Leader, Counsellor, the Father in God, the Spiritual head; the Presbyters (or Priests) who are the Pastors of the flocks; and the Deacons, who are the younger men being trained and prepared for the higher work.

2. Episcopacy means certain rules of Ordination which have prevailed for a long time in the Christian Church, and are eminently adapted for securing that the Ordination should take place with the authority of the whole Church. These rules are that a Deacon is Ordained by a Bishop, a Presbyter is Ordained by a Bishop with the assistance of other Presbyters, a Bishop is Consecrated by at least three other Bishops.

Now in Ordination is given the gift of God's Spirit for the work of the ministry, and that gift comes from our Lord Jesus Christ in response to the prayers of the Church. The function of the Ordaining Minister is to act on behalf of the Church, and those are the proper Ministers of Ordination, who, in the words of the English Articles, 'have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send Ministers into the Lord's vineyard'.

A Bishop then acts with the authority of the Church when he Ordains Presbyters or Deacons, and he himself receives his authority from the Church through his Consecration by a body of Bishops who represent not the local community but the Church universal. The Christian ministry ought to have the authority of the whole Church, and that is secured by the traditional rules of Ordination.

3. Episcopacy means that this ministry should be representative. In ancient times that was secured in the case of a Bishop, through his election by the whole body of the people of the Diocese, and his acceptance by the wider Church through the action of the Bishops who Consecrated him. The Councils of the Early Church were the first really representative bodies ever summoned. At a later date this method of appointment tended to be superseded by others, and in some cases the representative character was partially lost. In Rome, for example, popular election prevailed for some centuries, but it was so often accompanied by disturbance and conflict that a less democratic method was substituted. In Rome the election was by the College of Cardinals, originally the College of the Presbyters and Deacons of the City, and the Suburbicarian Bishops, that is the Bishops of Suburban districts. In the Medieval world the King, the Pope and the Cathedral Chapters contended for the privilege. In Modern times in the Anglican Communion as a whole the tendency is for the Bishop to be appointed by the Synods of the Clergy and Laity.

It must not be thought that the appointment of Bishops in the Church of England at the present time is inconsistent with the representative ideal. They are appointed by the Sovereign on the advice of the Prime Minister who represents the people; and in many ways probably the English Episcopate is more representative of the Church than that in countries which appear to have a more popular method of appointment.

In any case the essential thing is to secure in some way or other that the appointment of Bishops makes them representative of all the local Churches over which they preside and of the Church as a whole.

4. Episcopacy means a territorial organisation. It means the existence of the Parish and the Diocese—the Parish the unit most suitable for pastoral supervision and for community of worship, the Diocese the unit most suitable for wider administration. It is often customary and desirable that Dioceses should be united in Provinces under an Archbishop or Metropolitan, or as a National Church, but these further developments are not of the essence. The Diocese is the unit of Church administration: it is within the limits of Church law autonomous and self-governing: and it joins with all other Dioceses in building up the solidarity of the Christian Church.

5. Episcopacy means the government of the Church by the Bishop with the assistance of the Council of Presbyters and of the Laity. It is thus constitutional, and this constitutional element was inherent in it from the beginning, although there were practical difficulties in making it effective, for the principle of representation had not been thought out. Now the full conception of a representative system has been realised. Church Assemblies, Council and Synods have been organised—the Council for the Parish, the Synod for the Diocese, the Assemblies of larger bodies of the Church, and the Councils of Bishops. It is quite true that the initiative in organising such a system was made by Presbyterian bodies, and one of the advantages of the South Indian Church is that it will inherit that element in Church government well developed from a Presbyterian source, but it is not only not inconsistent with Episcopacy, but an essential although undeveloped element in it as it existed in the early centuries. The College of Presbyters and the influence and voice of the laity were a recognised part of the early Church life as may be seen, for example, by a study of the letters of Cyprian. This element was to a large extent lost during the Middle Ages, when, especially in Northern Countries, the Clergy were the trained representatives of a higher civilisation. After the Reformation these elements were rediscovered, and made much more effective through the principle of representation, and any united Church of the future which is to be permanent and adapted to a modern world must build up a constitutional and representative Episcopacy, which will recognise fully the traditional rights of the College of Presbyters, and the fundamental



truth that the Church is the whole company of faithful people, and that it is there that the basis of authority rests. So the voice of the great body of the laity must be effectively expressed. The Christian ministry unites the element of Episcopacy, Presbyterian and Congregationalism.

So far I have depicted what I conceive to be the characteristics of an Episcopacy which is representative and constitutional. It means a ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons. It means the preservation of the historical rules of Ordination. It means an organisation which is territorial and so aims at giving the Gospel message, and providing the means of grace to every one. It means a ministry representative of the whole Christian people, and the government of the Church by the Christian Bishop in consultation with the Presbyters and the Laity, or if it is preferred so to express it, the government by the consciousness of the whole Church, through the Bishops and Presbyters as its ministers.

## II

Such in my opinion is the meaning and significance of Episcopacy as a method of Church government. Now let me try and sum up what I believe to be the merits of the system.

First of all I should put efficient administration. The system secures that an area, the size of which should be so regulated as to make it within a man's capacity, should have an experienced administrative head. He would be selected for qualities which commend him to his fellow-Churchmen. He would have the authority and position which would enable him to guide the fortunes of the Church.

If we seek the analogy of secular affairs, we find that in every sort of Institution a capable head is of the first importance, whether it be a great school or college or whether it be a big business combination. So clearly is this recognised, so important is it considered to secure an efficient head that often for such a position a salary is provided quite out of proportion to that of any other official of the Institution. Particularly in any business concern all experience is in favour of appointing the best man obtainable and giving him full confidence, and some of the incomes attached to such positions are very large indeed.

I believe that exactly the same principle should guide us in the government of the Church, and that the organisation of the Diocese with the Bishop at its head is likely to make the Church strong and efficient. And this all the more so, because the Bishop is not autocratic—He holds a constitutional position—He must act only in accordance with the law of the Church, and he must be able to commend his policy to Presbyters and Laity alike. More than that, while in theory all Parish Priests act as his representatives; yet the custom of the Church has always decided that they

should hold an assured position in which they can carry on their work independently with a full sense of responsibility. In England it may be possible that this independence of the Parish Priest may be excessive. The secular lawyers have made his position a freehold, and this privilege has been one which has influenced the history of the Church of England as a whole most beneficially, although it has been the cause of local failure and individual abuses. I do not know that any one would recommend that this purely English custom should be transported elsewhere, but certainly the Parish Priest should hold a position from which he cannot be removed by the mere whim of either Bishop or people, and only on grounds laid down by the law of the Church.

Such a position ensures that the work of each Parish Priest will go on independently of the work of the Bishop. The Bishop is able to strengthen in many ways all local effort; but the local effort is not dependent on him for initiation or support.

I believe that these factors—the personal authority of the Bishop, the constitutional checks on his action and the autonomy of the Parish Priest working in harmony with his own people are calculated to secure the maximum of efficiency in the administration of the Church.

I think somewhat the same may be said of the government of a Province, of a National Church, or of larger units. The Synod of Bishops will provide a body of men of experience, of varying gifts. They will come into common conference, each with the authority of his own Diocese. They will be eminently fitted for the conduct of affairs and for the leadership of the Church in its wider aspect. But in this case also they will have no autocratic power. Their authority will be moral, not legal. They will be controlled by the Assemblies of the Clergy and Laity, by the very considerable autonomy of the province and the diocese, and by the corporate consciousness of the Church which is the ultimate and final spiritual authority.

But there will be a real power of Council and leadership—there will be the maximum of strength and the maximum of elasticity.

### III

I would place, secondly, the value of the Bishop as the spiritual leader, the counsellor, and to use a well-known phrase, 'Father in God', of all his flock in the Diocese, the Clergy especially but also the Laity. This is of course just one of those things which must depend on the personal characteristics and gifts of the Bishop; but it must be remembered that it is just as spiritual leader that he is appointed. His position gives him a unique opportunity, and one which any one should be able to use in one way, if not in another. The fact that he Ordains, and that, according to



all modern custom, at the time of his Ordination he is brought into the very closest personal and spiritual relationship with those he ordains, will give him particular influence with all the younger men; and it is the young men who particularly want help. He can advise them in their difficulties and encourage them when they are despondent. But he will also have many opportunities with those who are older, and I believe the personal influence of the Bishop may be one of the most potent forces for securing efficiency of work, and influencing the standard of intellectual and spiritual life.

With regard to the Laity, the custom of the Anglican Communion in entrusting to the Bishop all Confirmations gives him a special spiritual relationship with the men and women of his Diocese. It is, of course, obvious that it is only occasionally and in particular cases that he can have direct personal contact with individuals. But such opportunities will always occur, and a Bishop like other Clergy, but in a special way, if his life and character have won the confidence of his people, may often exercise a personal influence of the highest value.

And this personal and pastoral influence can be exercised in an especial way in a Missionary Diocese. The right method of Missionary work according to all historical precedent is to send out a Bishop accompanied by a band of Clergy. In that way a Church is firmly established, there is a bond of brotherhood between the Clergy which will mitigate the loneliness and feeling of isolation which often accompanies Missionary work, and there is a leader who can help and encourage his fellow workers. The unit is created which can provide all that is essential for Church life, and if the labours are successful and the work grows, in due course the Diocese, by a process which presents a close analogy to living phenomena, is divided and a further advance under new leadership becomes possible.

#### IV

Then, thirdly, this system of Church government with its territorial organisation should ensure proper provision for the spiritual needs of every individual. Every man with a Church properly organised is a resident in some Parish whether he desires it or not. There is a Parish Priest appointed who has the cure of Souls within a given area and is responsible. Any one within that area can claim spiritual assistance if he desires it. There is a Bishop in whose diocese he is, whether he wishes it or not, to whom he can apply to secure that his spiritual needs are met.

This is the essence of the traditional system of the Church. It is a system which is also presented by Presbyterianism, which equally with Episcopacy means a territorial organisation. It is something which

Congregationalism does not give. A congregation is a body composed of people who meet together for public worship and the cultivation of true religion without regard to any territorial principle. It provides ministrations for its own members and feels no obligations towards any others. A Parish and a Diocese are responsible for every one within the area, whether he wishes to make use of the assistance given him or not.

It may be necessary—probably almost always it would be necessary—in any developed society that this Parochial system should be supplemented by other agencies. That was conspicuously the case in the Middle Ages, when the Monastic system partly superseded and partly made up for the deficiencies of the Parochial system. In any united Church of the future there will be great variety of temperament, of religious tradition and national character, and there will be room for variety of ministrations. The duty of every Parish Priest to be prepared to minister to every one within his Parish should be recognised, but he should not have any monopoly. There will be a proper place in a fully organised Diocese for Religious Societies, such as Methodism, within the unity of the Church and not violating it. The Moravians as a great Missionary and Educational Society might find a home, as also the definite Religious Society, whether for men or women, whether to promote religious life or for evangelical work. The unifying influence for all such agencies as strengthened or supplemented or sometimes seemed to rival parochial work would be that of the Bishop.

## V

Then, fourthly, I should hold that Episcopacy was the best method of securing unity with freedom. It is I think a significant fact that it is particularly in the cause of Christian unity that Ignatius recommends the authority of Bishops so strongly, and it is I think remarkable how for many centuries the unity of the Church over a very wide area was preserved through the influence of the Episcopate. The great and permanent breaches in unity came when the civil authority interfered with the normal administration of the Church, and when the Bishop of Rome began to assert his authority over Diocesan Bishops. It was the transformation of the Papacy into a tyranny that created the conditions which broke up Christian unity at the Reformation. The great example of a united Church is the one united Catholic Church which existed throughout the world previous to the great schism of the Eleventh Century, and it was on an Episcopal basis that this unity rested.

But this unity is based upon freedom. It is of course quite easy to secure freedom if we entirely disregard unity. No one would doubt that there is freedom in religious matters at the present day in America, but quite clearly there is no unity. There is unity in the Church of Rome



but little freedom. Episcopacy such as has been described will I believe secure both. Freedom is secured by the fact that there is a certain measure of autonomy in each Parish and still more in each Diocese. Unity is secured partly by the rules of Consecration and Ordination, partly by the influence of the Episcopate. This unity may be both National and International. The unity of the Church in any country is represented and fostered by the assemblies of the Bishops with, at the present day, the assemblies of the Clergy and Laity. But a Bishop holds more than a Diocesan or National office. He is a Bishop of the Catholic Church. Christian unity will be created and consummated when Christian Bishops throughout the world are able to meet together in united conference, and such councils will lead and guide the various units—the Diocese, the Province, and the Nation—but they will have little power for imposing their will.

And as a corollary from what we have just said, the Episcopate is the greatest protection of the Church against any form of centralisation. It is of course quite easy to avoid centralisation if there is no uniform organisation. Ecclesiastical anarchy is free from that defect. So also is Congregationalism. But these have no effective unity of action. The problem is to combine unity, solidarity and efficient administration with the necessary elements of freedom and independence. That I believe to be secured by a constitutional and representative Episcopate. Christianity will always be weak while it is disunited. I do not believe that any real Christian unity can be attained without a strong organisation. What we have to build up is an organisation which leaves its proper element of freedom to every Parish, to every Diocese, to every National Church, while securing that all these have an effective unity in the one Catholic Church.

## VI

Lastly I would claim that Episcopacy, as I have described it, will harmonise the two elements of tradition and progress in the Christian Church. Christianity is built up on tradition, on a revelation once given, recorded in the Bible, and handed down from generation to generation: on a definite revelation of the nature and being of God and of man's duty and destiny. But this revelation has to be adapted to the needs of each generation and delivered in harmony with the language and thought of those to whom it is being preached. The Church not only receives and hands on the revelation but expands and restates it, and it has received the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit to lead it into all truth. We want therefore a system of Church order which will ensure both a loyal adhesion to the Christian tradition and the faithful transmission of it to each generation, and on the other hand the free life of the Spirit. If the

balance between these two elements is not secured, the teaching of the Church will no longer be sound and healthy.

It is interesting to note that it was because it secured this loyalty to the Christian tradition that so much stress was laid on Episcopacy in the primitive Church, and no one will doubt of the importance of its work in protecting the nascent Christianity from the vagaries of Gnosticism, but loyalty to tradition is quite as necessary at the present day. Yet in the primitive Church there was also freedom of life and thought. A Church which could combine in one unity Clement, Origen, Hippolytus, Irenæus and even to a large extent Tertullian showed no deficiency in freedom of intellectual life. Freedom and initiation prevailed in the Church until the supersession of Episcopacy by the Papacy. That destroyed intellectual freedom, and caused the upheaval of the Reformation. The Reformation restored a large element of freedom but the unity of the Christian tradition was broken. So long as there remains the independence of the Bishops in their respective Dioceses, so long will there be freedom for the living work of the Spirit.

It has sometimes been thought that Episcopacy is one of the bulwarks of the Papacy. That is an entirely erroneous opinion. It is only on the destruction of the Episcopate that the Papacy has been able to build itself up. It is well known that at the Council of Trent the question was debated at length whether Bishops hold their authority from the Pope or whether they have an independent authority given them from God. No decision was arrived at then, but by the Vatican Council the complete subserviency of the Episcopate to the Papacy was secured. The freedom of the Bishops, and their independent jurisdiction was the great defence of the Church against Papal autocracy, and in the Church of Rome that freedom has been destroyed.

There are of course many Religious Communions or Churches in which there is little or no authority, and where individual opinion, discretion or utterance is quite uncontrolled, but these Societies have little or no coherence. Their existence does not make for Christian unity, and often they hold very loosely to the Christian tradition. What is claimed for Episcopacy is that it preserves the freedom and independence of the Church while at the same time securing loyalty to the Christian revelation. It is the harmony of these two which is so important.

I have written this description of what Episcopacy is and means with the underlying conception of the belief in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I believe that Christian brotherhood means Christian unity. That the Christian Church should not be divided up into a number of Societies separate from one another and even sometimes antagonistic, that it cannot assert its proper influence either Nationally or Internationally unless it is united, that our aim should be to build up a united National



Church which would impress the influence of Christianity on the Nation, but that it should be part of one Catholic Church throughout the world. I believe that this Church should be efficient for the work that it has to accomplish, and a powerful centre of spiritual life. I believe that this Society while united in one body should be free from the restraining influences of centralisation, and give full scope for spiritual autonomy and freedom. Now for all this many influences are required. The organisation of the Church is only one and not the most important factor. There is need for the development of centres of intellectual and spiritual life and influence. A Church should be in close touch with the organised learning of the Universities. There is need for wise religious education. But organisation is a factor and an important one, and I believe that Episcopacy as I have described it, and as the traditional system of government of the Christian Church, is that form of polity best suited for the well-being of our religion. It combines freedom and elasticity with efficiency and solidarity.

A. C. GLOUCESTER.

## South India Church Union

### Action of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, July 1931

The following statement was presented to and accepted by the Conference:—

1. The Conference notes with sincere sympathy the aim which the representatives of the three Churches in South India have set before them. The ideal is that of a Christian fellowship which will comprehend in one common life and organisation whatever of value they have received in their separate organisations;—a fellowship wherein 'every member will find such a spiritual atmosphere that he can worship God with added devotion, and serve other men with enlarged power and opportunities'.

The Conference reaffirms its conviction that organic union is in the interests of the Kingdom of God in South India, and therefore records its gratitude to God for the large measure of agreement already reached in the consultations. Believing that this work is of God, and that the action taken by the South India Provincial Synod and its representatives in continuing consultations on the Joint Committee is such that it can heartily approve, the Conference joins in the prayer that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide the consultations and may be poured out on those who come into the union which they are assured is in accordance with His will.

2. It is evident that the united Church, when it comes into being, will not be a Wesleyan Methodist Church, any more than it will be an

Anglican, or Congregational or Presbyterian Church. The ideal of the Joint Committee, in which the Conference concurs, is that the united Church shall be a distinct province of the Universal Church, and shall offer in a form that will be appropriate to India a living witness to God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. While the Conference is prepared to offer suggestions and advice, the ultimate decision lies with the Indian Church. Even in India, however, the union of the Churches concerned can only be secured and be successful if it meets with the most hearty acceptance from the whole of the constituent elements. It is noted that the Report of the South India Provincial Synod states that up to now the Scheme has not 'caught the imagination' of our people. It must do so if it is to go through in that glow of enthusiasm which alone will carry the Churches into a union making the new Church an effective instrument in the hands of God for bringing His Kingdom into India. Especially is it necessary that the Scheme should command the convinced support of the Indian Ministry.

3. The Conference notes with satisfaction the explicit assurance of the Joint Committee that the acceptance of Episcopal ordination as the rule of the united Church does not involve denial of the validity of the ministry of the non-Episcopal Churches, and heartily supports the affirmation of the South India Provincial Synod that the acceptance of Episcopacy as a method of Church Government implies no assent by the ministers and members of the Wesleyan Methodist Church to the theory that Episcopacy is an essentially distinct order of the Ministry. As permanent evidence of this liberty in the interpretation of Episcopacy, the Conference strongly holds that presbyters should always take part in the laying on of hands at the consecration of a bishop.

4. The Conference recognizes that the united Church will endeavour to combine various elements, which have long been separated and hitherto irreconcilable. Particularly is this true with regard to the doctrine of the Sacraments. From the outset it is necessary to admit that other interpretations of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper than those which have been commonly held in the Wesleyan Methodist Church will be possible in the united Church.

At the same time the Conference welcomes the appended statement of the South India Joint Committee on 'The Implications of the Scheme in relation to communion and inter-communion', and declares that when the union has been effected, the Wesleyan Methodist Church will gladly receive any communicant member of the united Church to communion in any of its Churches. (See Appendix II.)

The Conference endorses the following resolution of the South India Provincial Synod:—'In our judgment it will help greatly to increase the spirit of unity between the consulting Churches, and within our own

Church to win the mind of our people if, even before union is consummated, united worship and especially inter-communion between the consulting Churches can be made possible. The absence of inter-communion at this time constitutes a most formidable obstacle to union in the minds of our people.'

5. The Conference would re-affirm its desire to follow wherever the Divine Spirit may lead and to take any further part so indicated in 'the great endeavour to recover and manifest to the world the meaning of that complete Christian unity which our Lord intended His people to enjoy and to impart to all mankind'. At the same time the Conference's approval of the action of the South India Provincial Synod in continuing the negotiations, need not be understood as involving the opinion that a similar scheme of re-union would be suitable elsewhere.

6. In response to the request of the South India Provincial Synod, the Conference would assure the South India Districts that with the advent of union the work for which it has been responsible will still be a matter of deep concern to the Wesleyan Methodist Church in this country, and that before any scheme of union is accepted, every care must be taken to secure that as far as possible, the financial interests involved shall receive full and adequate consideration. The Conference shares the hope of the Joint Committee that the existing relations of communion and fellowship between the Churches in South India and the Churches in Great Britain and Ireland will be strengthened rather than impaired by the proposed union, provided that the Scheme in its final form is found acceptable to our Church.

The Conference on presentation of the above Report passed the following resolutions :—

- (a) The Conference receives and adopts the Report of the Joint Committee of the Committee on Faith and Order and the Missionary Committee.
- (b) The Conference agrees that the South India Provincial Synod be authorised to continue the consultations and to report further progress through the Missionary Committee.
- (c) The Conference agrees that the Joint Committee of the Committee on Faith and Order and the Missionary Committee be instructed to consider such recommendations as may be received from the South India Provincial Synod and to report to the next Conference.
- (d) The Conference requests the Missionary Committee to consider what, for the Methodist Church, will be the financial implications of the scheme for South India Church Union, and to present to the next Conference such statement as can be made with advantage at the stage which the consultations will then have reached.



THE FOLLOWING EMENDATIONS IN THE SCHEME WERE  
SUGGESTED BY THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE, AND WERE  
NOTED BY THE CONFERENCE:

(1) Section IIIb.

*On Episcopacy.* The revised paragraph recommended by the Ninth Session was accepted (Res. 4). The Committee, however, adopted also the resolutions of the South India Provincial Synod on this matter, with one addition, the paragraphs then reading:—‘The Provincial Synod instructs its representatives to ask the Joint Committee to consider the insertion in Section IIIb, para. 1, after the phrase ‘But this acceptance does not bind the united Church to the acceptance of any particular theory concerning episcopacy’ of the words ‘as a distinct order of the ministry’, and the substitution of ‘or’ for ‘either’. The whole sentence would then read: ‘But this acceptance does not bind the united Church to the acceptance of any particular theory concerning episcopacy as a distinct order of the ministry or concerning episcopal ordination as a qualification for the ministry or concerning episcopacy as a determining factor in its relations with other Churches.

‘This Synod is of opinion that the grave misgivings some ministers and members of our Church have about the acceptance of episcopacy as an integral part of the basis of union will be very greatly mitigated when it is clearly realised that acceptance of episcopacy as a method of Church government does not bind them to the theory that there are essentially different orders of the Ministry. The ministers of a diocese are all shepherds of Christ’s flock, among whom the Bishop stands as first among equals.’

(The words italicised were inserted in this form by the London Joint Committee.)

(2). Section VI (2).

Add to the statement of the privileges and obligations of membership in the united Church, the following sentence describing the person to be admitted to such privileges and obligations:—‘seeks or enjoys a personal experience of union with God in Christ.’

(3). Section VII.A. (4).

*Stationing of Ministers.* The revised paragraph was considered as set forth in Resolution 15 of the Ninth Session. It was felt that more direct provision should be made in the scheme for the functioning of some body parallel to the Stationing

Committee in Wesleyan Methodism, and that the power of stationing should not be left to the Bishop, even in consultation with diocesan committees.

(4). Section VII. A. (11).

The Committee resolved to give the strongest possible support to the action of the South India Provincial Synod in its demand that the Diocesan Council shall have the right to represent its views to the Moderator and the Synod, if it is convinced that its Bishop is incapable of discharging the duties of his office.

(5). Section VII. B. (7).

In reference to the consecration of a Bishop, the Committee adopted the view expressed in para. 3 of the foregoing statement.

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## The Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order, High Leigh, August 1931

It was a great privilege to be able to attend the meetings of the Lausanne Conference Continuation Committee, held at High Leigh, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, England, in August 1931. Accounts of the sessions have appeared in the religious press of the World, but it is not unfitting that a few notes should find a place in *Church Union News and Views*, in the light of the unique place that the South Indian Movement holds in the general World Movement for union.

Looking back on the meetings after several weeks, the memory of the devotional sessions is very vivid. Even to one accustomed to united singing in more than one language, there was something peculiarly impressive in the use of the Hymnal (prepared for the Stockholm Conference) with its German, French, English, Scandinavian, sometimes Latin and Greek rendering of hymns, of authorship no less varied: and to realise that even this variety of tongues only touched the fringe of the languages familiarly used by those taking part. The rich sense of unity in Christ, underlying these linguistic and cultural differences, was yet more significant in the actual conduct of our devotions, by the English Archbishop of York, the German Dr. Lang, the French Professor Choisy, the American Dr. William Adams Brown, the Greek Orthodox Bishop Irenäus from Serbia. It was in the act of worship of our common Lord that the possibilities of a far closer union among Christians of great diversity of theological outlook and ecclesiastical tradition became most real and seemed most worth striving for.

Much of the time of the Committee was spent in discussing the Interim Report of the Theological Committee appointed two years ago to consider the Theology of Grace. The Bishop of Gloucester, the Chairman of the Committee, presented the Report and explained the method of its operation. Various sections of the subject were allotted to various members, who took a year to prepare papers: these were then circulated to all colleagues, in English, French, or German, for mutual criticism. After consideration and revision, all were again circulated in English, and for thirteen days the Committee had met at Gloucester and had discussed the whole Report. The Interim Report was the result of this—and a book is to be published in English and in German, to which the Report will be the Preface. The discussion was of absorbing interest, and the book when it appears, with the authority of a committee representing not only Anglicans and other Western Christians, but also the views of the Greek Orthodox Church, should be of rare value. Again the net impression created by all the talk of the theological experts who were at High Leigh is of the wonderful measure of fundamental agreement, in spite of differing usages and phrases that have often been storm centres of controversy. Dr. William Adams Brown made a suggestion which it is to be hoped may be acted on—that both agreements and differences should be frankly and simply stated in ordinary language; and from many others came the strong desire that as far as possible the old terms, with their associations of conflict, should be banished and an attempt made to state the truth as we see it today—not ignoring the thought of the past, but using the terms of today, unencumbered by the trammels of dead controversies. There were no two opinions as to the value of the theologians thus continuing to work together, and the Committee was continued. When the book on Grace has been published, the Committee is to deal with the doctrine of the Eucharist—and there is no subject of Christian thought that more needs the joint consideration of theologians, so that if possible some fuller understanding may come: to share the experience of God's grace in the Lord's Supper is the foundation of fruitful intellectual study as to the doctrine: it is much that men of such different schools should recognise the essential oneness of the experience, and that the experience, depending as it does on God's own free gift, is far more wonderful than any explanation of it can be.

On the practical side the Committee made some arrangements for the next meeting of the World Conference. All being well it is again to meet at Lausanne, in 1937, and it was decided that the Churches should have before them as soon as possible the following topics as being under consideration for inclusion in the programme:

1. The Church and the Word.
2. The Church and the World.



3. The Meaning of Grace :
  - (a) Grace and the Church.
  - (b) Grace and the Ministry.
  - (c) Grace and the Sacraments.
4. The Church's fellowship in life and worship :
  - (a) The life of the Church as expressed in the Holy Communion.
  - (b) The Communion of Saints.
  - (c) The Church and the Churches: including such questions as those affecting Intercommunion, Federation, etc.

The suggestion for the general subject of the Conference is 'The Church in the purpose of God'.

Meanwhile a cordial invitation was accepted, that the Continuation Committee meet again in August 1932 at Wiesbaden.

A few words must be added on the outstanding figures at the Committee. We were admirably served by the Chairman, Archbishop Tempie of York. His unfailing suavity and humour combined with his full grasp of all the business before us to make him the perfect Chairman of such a gathering. Dr. Garvie also made notable contributions to the spirit and thought of the Committee. Other names have already been mentioned; but of special interest to South India was Bishop Palmer, late of Bombay and now Assistant to Bishop Headlam of Gloucester—but in no wise relaxing in his interest in the South Indian scheme, in whose formulation he has played so great a part. Perhaps most significant of all was the presence, in addition to the eighty delegates, of sixteen young people, as visitors from twelve different countries: they followed all the discussions with close attention, and their presence is a guarantee that the great Union Movement will have its place in the thought and prayer of the coming generation.

J. S. M. HOOPER.

## My attitude toward Church Union<sup>1</sup>

If there is any question, in the history of the Indian Church, which has engaged the thought and has awakened the interest of a large number of both Christians and non-Christians, in India and outside India, it is none other than the question of Church Union in South India. How widespread is its interest, and how it is looked upon as a matter of momentous issue, can be easily seen from the quarterly, entitled *Church Union News and Views* which devotes itself entirely to the subject of Church Union in South India.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. J. S. M. Hooper has replied to this article in *The Methodist Recorder*. See Clippings, p. 158—Ed. *Church Union—News and Views*.

In spite of all that is said in favour of the union of Churches in India, I have my own doubts with regard to the kind of Union which the Proposed Scheme of Union attempts to bring about.

As often as I dwell upon this subject I am confronted with a reel of questions, to a few of which, I shall venture to give full expression here.

## I. IS ORGANIC UNION A DESIRABLE THING?

Any attempt to herd the people of different denominations into one pen by means of a Scheme, which, apparently embodying the Congregational, Presbyterian and Anglican elements, gives prominence to the last, in singling out Episcopacy as the ruling factor in the basis of Union, is, to say the least, utterly undesirable. The acceptance of Episcopacy in any form does not commend itself to me as an essential feature of Union. It is the yoke which the Scheme seems to lay on the non-Episcopal Churches, while for us to be united with our Master, and to be united with one another there is no yoke other than the one which the Master Himself has bidden us take upon ourselves, even the yoke which is His Cross. If the Cross of Christ cannot unite us all together, what can?

If it is argued that to achieve Organic Union, it is incumbent on us to concede to Episcopacy in some form or another, then it seems to create a situation analogous to the one with which St. Paul was confronted, when the Jewish Christians made circumcision an indispensable requisite for the Gentiles to fulfil, to enter into the Christian Fold.

Apart from Episcopacy, I have my own presentiments about the very idea of trying to bring the Christians of different denominations under one form of Church Government, seeing that we are not all alike in our tastes and temperaments. If the Episcopal form of Church government is appealing to some, the Presbyterian form, or the Congregational form may commend itself to others. He Who has equipped the Episcopal Church with Bishops and Priests, to be shepherds, guides and spiritual fathers, has not left the non-Episcopal Churches without His servants to perform similar duties. Even among people to whom set forms of Church government and worship are 'anathema' God has raised for Himself servants who for their deep piety, and spiritual and intellectual attainments not only stand unrivalled in the history of the Church, but have also become the envy of the Organised Christian bodies. The Scheme as far as I am able to discern aims at uniformity, which would only cramp the spiritual growth of any Christian community. As though our belief in Jesus Christ and our allegiance to Him are not sufficient in themselves to bring us all together, to suppose that by conceding a certain type of Church Government, we shall all be one, is something which is beyond my comprehension.

What has Episcopacy or any other Order of Ministry to do with the union that we want to have with one another? Even as Episcopacy, in

the form in which we have hitherto known it, is rendered colourless and effete by the Scheme, this order and the present Orders of Ministry in the other Churches, may also become obsolete, and out of place, with the changing of times. As such why should we base our Union on foundations which are transitory? The Church, if it is compared with the body, is the body of Christ, and not of Episcopacy or Presbyterianism or Congregationalism. If we think of it in terms of a building, then its foundation is Christ, and not any form of Church Government. If Christ is not sufficient to be the basis, the only basis of Union, every other basis is a sinking sand.

## II. WHEREIN ARE WE DISUNITED?

Here is the Wesleyan Church at Medak! Anglicans, Lutherans, Free Churchmen and certain Laymen from other Missions have from time to time preached from its pulpit. Certain Anglican dignitaries have also adorned that part of the Chancel, where in their own Churches the Bishop is usually enthroned. And at such times we fain would have received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at their hands, if they had only deigned to administer it to us. Very recently a certain visitor being struck with the beauty of its architecture, the Order and Form of the Morning Service on a Sunday, and the 'rags' in which the preacher had appeared that morning, remarked to me in passing: 'If I had not known that I was in a Wesleyan Church, from what I have noticed I would easily have been carried away by the impression that I was sitting in an Anglican Church'. Yet, more than one visitor who had happened to be present at the English Service in the same Church observed, 'I like the simplicity of the worship. It does not drive us through the whirl of a stereotyped Liturgical form, which gives little scope for the spontaneous expression of one's heart's devotion to God.'

Though our Baptist friends may repudiate us on the ground that 'Immersion' is not our pet belief, we have nevertheless immersed, more for the sake of expediency than for its doctrinal virtue, into the Name of Jesus Christ, scores and scores of people of various Castes, all along the banks of the Godavari, and that, in the waters of, what the Indians in these parts consider, the Sacred Ganga.

A Church which has become all things to all men for the sake of the Gospel! And now, what is it that hinders this Church from having Union with the other Churches? As far as one could see, the South India United Church and the Wesleyan Church are already united, unless by union is meant, a uniform type of worship and Church Government. The unity that we look forward to, is the unity of purpose, and not so much of identity. I feel that we are united in the essentials and that there is practically very



little that hinders us from preaching the Gospel and from administering or receiving the Holy Communion in each other's churches. But from the Anglican point of view we seem to lack something which makes it hard for them to unite with us. That something is not of the spirit; it is something extraneous. It is Episcopacy.

If Episcopacy, in any form is a qualification to make us eligible for Union, then I feel that the basis of Union is more sacerdotal than spiritual. If we are not united now in matters spiritual, what guarantee is there that we shall be one when we are brought together under one form of Church Government, by means of a constitution, which after all can only tend to bind us externally. If a Minister of any of the Free Churches is not fit to preach or to administer the Holy Communion to the Anglicans in their or his own Church now how will his submission to a Constitution make him worthy of the task? In maintaining that we ought to conform to one type of Church Government, to be united with one another, we seem to have shifted the centre of gravity in the Scheme from the spiritual to the sacerdotal. The Scheme which makes Episcopacy an indispensable and overruling element in the basis of Union provides a germ for sacerdotalism, and tends to draw even the non-Episcopal Churches into the vortex of Institutionalism, which is already the bane of present-day Christianity.

### III. WHAT IS IT IN THE INDIAN CHURCH THAT IS SCANDALOUS IN THE EYES OF THE NON-CHRISTIANS?

The scandal does not lie so much in the mere denominational differences, as it does in the attitude of one denomination to another. The non-Christian, whether he is a Hindu or a Moslem, is not so unaware of the differences in his own religion, that he should make the mere names and the differences of worship in the various denominations, the object of his criticism against Christianity. If he finds fault with it at all, it must be either because he, despite all the sectarianism in his religion, finds more tolerance and unity among his own people, than he discerns among the Christians of different denominations, or, because he expects such charity among the people called Christians as is not in evidence among the different sectarians in his own religion. As things are at present the former explanation seems to be nearer the truth.

It is the attitude of one denomination toward another that is subjecting the Indian Church to the censure of the outsider. For, we seem to bolster up our differences as though they are the very breath of Christianity and seem to relegate the Cross of Christ to the background. The different 'isms' in Christianity are so pronounced that when the non-Christian comes to think of it, he spells it in terms of Anglicanism, Wesleyanism, Lutheranism and so forth. And how will the united Church ameliorate the situation,

seeing that it will itself be a huge conglomeration of Christians, who will all ultimately form just one other denomination, under the grandiose nomenclature 'EPISCOPAL'!

Only if we can cease giving such prominence to the non-essentials in our Churches, as would obscure Jesus Christ the central and life-giving Personality in our Religion, and in spite of all our Ecclesiastical differences come together to worship Him, to preach Him, and to partake of the Holy Communion as members of one family, whose head is Christ, then would we set the Church free from the scandal of 'a house divided in itself'.

And if we were a little more generous in our attitude to one another, and by loving one another showed to the world that we are the disciples of our Master Jesus Christ, we would be on the path of a much greater union than the one which is being contemplated by the Proposed Scheme of Union in South India.

#### IV. HOW FAR HAS THE NEED FOR ORGANIC UNION BEEN FELT BY THE INDIAN CHRISTIANS THEMSELVES?

I am not quite sure that the cry for union has come from within India, and much less from the Indians primarily. To me it appears that there is going to be just one institution more, which would be called into existence, under the agency of the Missionaries with the help of a few like-minded Indians.

In the Wesleyan Mission in Hyderabad District the number of Indian Christians who have grasped as much as the fringe of the import of the Scheme, is very insignificant, while those that are in favour of it are in the minority. Personal talks with the Indian Brethren in the other South Indian Districts have revealed to me the fact, that there are quite a number of them who are not in the least enamoured of the Scheme. Some have expressed their dislike to it in very strong language. And there are not a few who are on the fence, as it were, evidently watching the trend of events only to surrender themselves to the inevitable.

As India is passing through a very critical period of her life and as the circumstances portend the dawn of a new era in which the burden of the country may fall solely on the shoulders of her daughters and sons, is it not but right to expect that even in matters relating to the Church in India full freedom should be given to the Indians to formulate their own Church Government, which would so commend itself to the Indian Christians as to bring them all into one Organic Whole, if it would be considered desirable, which is still a matter of doubt in my mind? What we notice at present is, not only that the number of Indians who seem to feel the need for Organic Union, as is suggested by the Scheme, to be insignificant, but also that the initiative has not been taken by the Indians

themselves. In these circumstances the united Church will only add to the already existing innumerable denominations, one other organisation, to subject Christianity in India to further ridicule.

## V. WHAT SORT OF UNION DO WE REALLY NEED?

Let it be understood by all the denominations that the worshipping of God, as revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the partaking of the Holy Communion, in any Church are the birthrights of every Christian, to whatever denomination he may belong. In honour preferring one another, let us acknowledge the Ministry in one denomination, to be equally valid with the Ministry in the other, realising that even the highest form of hierarchy was only instituted more for the sake of expediency, than for creating distinctions among God's servants. To whatever denomination we may belong, let us unite, as becoming the children of our Father in Heaven, in such matters as Communion and the preaching of the Gospel and thus present a common and united front in combating any evil, Political, Social or Ecclesiastical. Let us come together from time to time to talk about the work of God in our different areas, and at such times, if it is feasible, begin and end our Sessions with the celebration of the Holy Communion. In this way we shall not only inspire ourselves with the strength of unity, but shall also help the outsiders to see that we are all one in spite of our multifarious differences, which, human nature being what it is, are bound to exist.

Some have observed that India has passed the stage of being satisfied with a mere Federal Union, and that we are aiming at Organic Union because we are all already one in spirit. I am sorry to confess that I have not seen any tangible results of the so-called Federal Union to warrant us to aim at any other kind of union. Further, we can never consider ourselves to be truly one in spirit, until and unless intercommunion becomes a settled practice among all the Churches.

Finally, may I humbly beg our Missionary friends not to contemplate the creation of another denomination in India, but to render all the help they can to make the existing Churches and Institutions indigenous, and self-supporting, and to leave the question of Organic Union till the Indians themselves urge it. When the need for such an union is felt the Indian Christians, who are not oblivious to all the good that the Missionaries have done to them and to their country, and for which they remain ever grateful to them, will themselves surely seek the wise and able and experienced advice and guidance of their Missionary friends. But just now the question of Organic Union as is laid out in the Proposed Scheme of Union is too premature for any consideration.

E. L. ANANTA RAO.



## Church Union

*Notes of an address delivered by the Rev. J. A. Jacob, M.A., B.D., of the United Theological College, Bangalore, at a Meeting for Prayer for Church Union in the Y.M.C.A. Bourdillon Branch, Infantry Road, Bangalore.*

The supreme need of India today is Unity—social, racial, political and religious. Year by year, almost day by day we are learning the nature of this need through ever-deepening disappointment and distress. Communalism is recognised to be the greatest stumbling block to our national progress.

In some respects, denominationalism in the Indian Church may be compared to communalism in India. Western Missionaries preached Christianity in India on denominational lines. It was inevitable for Western Missionaries to do so since they were sent by different denominations in the West. But Indian Christian leaders were feeling from the very beginning that the existence of so many denominations stood in the way of efficiency, nationalism and the effective spread of the Gospel of Christ in India. Leaders like Dr. Kali Charan Bannurje of Bengal, Raja Sir Harnam Singh of Punjab and Dr. Samuel Sathianathan of Madras pleaded for an indigenous Church but their words fell on dead ears.

The small group of 30 Indian Christians who met in Tranquebar on May 1st and 2nd 1919 in connection with the Evangelistic Forward Movement discussed this subject and with a venture of faith expressed themselves strongly in favour of a united Church for South India. The challenge of the present hour in this period of national reconstruction and the critical situation of India itself call us to mourn our past divisions and turn to our Lord Jesus Christ to seek in Him the Unity of the body expressed in one visible Church. What the Indian Church needs today is men who are so filled into the power of the Holy Spirit that they will see what are the fundamentals on which Indian Christians of all denominations can unite so that we can with a united voice proclaim the Gospel in India, convict men of their sins and point to Jesus who can forgive men their sins and bring them into fellowship with God.

In this vast country of ours with about 320 millions, the Indian Church with a comparatively small number is faced with the titanic task of winning India for Christ. It is an overwhelming responsibility. Added to this, we find ourselves rendered weak and relatively impotent by our unhappy divisions—divisions for which we were not responsible and which have been, as it were, imposed upon us from without: divisions which we did not create and which we do not desire to perpetuate. Let us study afresh the mind of Christ and be ready to respond to each new light that the changing conditions bring. May we have the courage born of inspiration

to go forward in the spirit of Abraham who 'went out not knowing whither he went' fully believing that the God who has called us out from this denominational seclusion will take us to the promised land.

We have met today to pray for union. Let us remember the members of the Joint Committee on Union, the representatives of the three negotiating churches, that they may find a solution to the many problems that confront them in presenting a scheme acceptable to all. Let us pray that we may seek to realise our fundamental unity more fully that God may liberate the energies of the Indian Church for its great task of bringing India to the feet of Christ.

## A Vision of Church Union

### (A Reverie)

As a dream—silently, gradually, irresistibly, it dawned on an inner consciousness that had slumbered in my soul—this Vision of union for the Church of the living God redeemed with His blood,—a Church now full of strife and *disunion* 'by schisms rent asunder, and by heresies distressed,'—for such a Church blessed union and oneness in Him its living Head! An impossibility surely—a dream,—yet it is written 'they shall dream dreams' which are reality—and 'see visions' which crystallize into actual fact! A union not external or ecclesiastical, or even theological,—but inward and spiritual,—not marred by compromise but comprehensive as the Truth itself,—an actual, living Union—because by His Spirit's sweet uniting grace the members of His body are joined together in Him their living Head. A Union where strife and envyings cease, and names and sects and parties fall,—since love has rendered all distinctions void,—and saints—the true members of His body are

'Joined by the unction from above  
In mystic fellowship of love'!

A present-day saint declares—'when God gives a Vision we must concentrate on the Vision until it becomes real,—nor may we mistake the Vision for the reality'—which is Union for the Church of Christ on earth,—a Union (not uniformity) which is inclusive and expanding, yet wherein no vital principle is sacrificed, or essential truth surrendered,—and which shall claim all living members of His body in its embrace,—'*till we all come* in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,—and may grow up into Him in all things—which is the Head even Christ, from whom the whole body *fitly joined together* and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, *maketh increase of the body* unto the edifying of

itself in love,' thus 'coming together' and 'growing together' until the Church's Union is perfected in Him! And the Vision vouchsafed, reaching down the vista of the future, revealed to 'faith's enlightened sight'—His people as one family in Him gathered at His Table in sweetest fellowship with their Lord and Master, *and with each other!* O blissful climax! O Holy Communion of Saints in very truth! 'The badge and token this—the sure confirming seal' of true and highest Union that we are one in Him, as He is with the Father! (John xvii.) And it is surely coming—this Union for His Church,—since it is the purpose of the Father, and the Will of the Son and accomplished by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Else, what signifies this increasing desire for Union—this urge towards it in the hearts of many true believers—if it were not God? Is not Church Union the good pleasure of Him who is head over all things to the Church—the fulness of Him which filleth all in all? O wondrous conception—that He, our Risen and Glorified Head, is not complete without us—His redeemed and united Church—which is His fulness!

Amen.

The Reverie ended—but the Vision remained. And let us not be disobedient unto the heavenly Vision till it reaches its glorious consummation in Union for the Church of the living God in South India, and also for all our fellow-believers who call on His Name—both their God and Ours.

EMILY V. WALKER,

Bangalore.

## Clippings

### Union with South India

[Clipped from the report of the address which the Metropolitan of India gave at the meeting of the Diocesan Council of the Church of Ceylon, held in Colombo in September 1931, as published by *The Ceylon Observer*.—ED., *Church Union News and Views*.]

### Union with South India

'The Bishop in his charge has referred to the scheme for the Union of South India and Ceylon. If we are to grow into a real Church which answers to the mind of God, we must bring together the different elements into which the Church is divided—so that we might grow together into one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, revered and splendid. When I think of the elements which are going to form (if it is God's will) the United Church of South India, I sometimes feel there is one essential element which is sometimes lacking. The evangelic element is there, the liberal element is represented but the Catholic element seems to be in South India strikingly weak. I am not speaking as a member of any party at all, because a Bishop is above party,

(Hear! hear!), but as one who believes intensely that every element of the Church of God has something to contribute, and that if you do not have the truly Catholic element represented in the Church of South India, it will fail in achieving its object.'

The Metropolitan at this stage read out the following adaptation of Macaulay's verses in 'The Lays of Ancient Rome':—

There none was for a party  
But all were for the Lord  
Divine yet truly human  
Eternally adored  
Then creeds were firmly holden  
By all within the fold,  
And Christians loved like brothers  
In the brave days of old.



## Union with South India (*Contd.*)

'What we are aiming at,' continued the Metropolitan, 'is that every evangelical, Catholic and liberal will find within a United Church a home which will help him to get near to God. That is the aim of the movement—not to be one-sided, but to be truly Catholic. My one anxiety is that this element which is lacking in the Church of South India will be introduced.

'What is the remedy? I propose that the Diocese of Colombo should find its place within a United Church of South India and Ceylon.

I know that you have not yet really considered the question, but the time is going to come when you will face it, and I beseech you not to look at it from the point of view of what you will get, but from the point of view of what you will contribute.'

The Bishop of Colombo then thanked the Metropolitan for his message and assured him that the Diocesan Council would carefully weigh in their minds what he had said and come to a right decision.

## Church Union

### Council Gives 'General Approval'

[Extracts from the proceedings of the Madras Diocesan Council taken from 'The Madras Mail' of November 20, 1931]

The Bishop of Madras speaking on Church Union said that all the ministries would have to live in charity with one another. The world was talking union from one end to the other, but the difficulty was who would take the plunge? If India took the plunge others would follow. People in Australia, China, Africa and Canada had asked him what the Union scheme was as they wished for guidance. It might be in church union in South India that an Anglican parish would receive the appointment of an ex-Wesleyan or an ex-Presbyterian Minister. Union meant tolerance, patience and real brotherhood.

'There has been a distinct move for church union in North India so that we might see a united Church of All India. We want time to grow together. You have to test the scheme, live it and people will see the beauty of it. There have been trials and errors throughout the ages, and unity and brotherhood are only achieved by working and living together.'

When there was one Church of Christ all communicants would be able to and would want to communicate in whatever country they were. The Anglican or the Wesleyan would take their church with them to enrich the new church. None of the churches would lose the bonds of fellowship and union which they had hitherto enjoyed.

Regarding intercommunion with other churches, the Council amended the clause of the proposed scheme to read (as given in italics) that churches with which the united Church had relations of communion and fellowship would be willing to receive any communicant member of the united Church, if baptized, to communion as a visitor in any of their churches.

The following resolutions were passed by the Diocesan Council in view of the fact that its delegates to the General Council at Calcutta in January next will be required to vote

upon a proposal to give 'general approval' to the Scheme of Union prepared by the Joint Committee of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, the South India United Church and the South India Provincial Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

This 'general approval' is equivalent to the first reading of a Bill in Parliament. If it is given by the Church of India at the General Council, the Scheme of Union will be submitted to all the Diocesan Councils to enable them to represent their views on points of detail in the scheme and these will be considered at a future meeting of the General Council before the scheme can be finally passed.

#### FOUR HEADS

The subject was considered by the Diocesan Council under four heads:

(1) The general principles or basis of union—scriptures, creed, sacraments, ministry.

(2) The interim period—the recommendations of the Joint Committee as to the relationship between ministers and members of the united Church from the consummation of the union until all the ministers are episcopally ordained.

(3) The relation of the united Church to the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon.

(4) Intercommunion—the implications of the scheme in this matter as expressed in the report of the Joint Committee.

#### 'GENERAL APPROVAL'

The Council voted on each of these matters separately and with regard to the first three without a dissentient voice the Council instructed its delegates to vote in favour of general approval. Regarding one clause of No. 4 which states that 'any communicant member of any church which is in fellowship with any of the uniting churches is at liberty

to communicate in any Church of the united Church,' an amendment was passed instructing the delegates to take steps to see that this provision does not apply to unbaptized persons. With this amendment the fourth section also was approved *nem. con.*

Thus the Madras Diocesan Council without a dissentient voice has instructed its delegates to the General Council to vote in favour of giving 'general approval' to the proposed scheme of Union in South India.

## Congregationalism and Organization

BY DR. W. B. SELBIE

(From 'The Christian World')

'E.L.' writes apropos of the Centenary of the Congregational Union asking whether it is possible to get up any real enthusiasm for organized Congregationalism. He thinks that to the younger generation Congregationalism makes little or no appeal. They may be devoted to their individual churches or ministers, but it is a matter of taste rather than conviction, and he asks whether it is possible to use the Centenary to bring about any better state of mind.

Well, here is another of our pessimists, and I am afraid there are too many of them. Of course, if Congregationalism is nothing more than one mode of church polity among others, if it stands only for democracy in church government as it is sometimes described, I should quite agree that it is difficult to get up any enthusiasm for it or to find reasons for perpetuating it in its organized form.

But Congregationalism is a great deal more than this, and the best thing that the Centenary movement can do is perhaps not merely to advertise it in its present form, but to take us back to its origins, remind us of the principles which it involves, and so restore something of its ancient fragrance and power. As everyone knows, early Congregationalism stood above everything else for the principle that the members of a Christian church must be Christians. This is now a commonplace among all the churches, but it was not so then. The first Congregationalists realized that the Church was something more than a State institution or a human organization. It was the body of Jesus Christ, constituted by the presence of Jesus Christ in the midst of His people, a Spirit-filled and Spirit-ruled community, owing no authority but that of God Himself manifested in and through the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In other words, Congregationalism stood for vital Christianity, for Christianity in its purest, simplest and freest form, and the polity which it evolved was altogether secondary to this main spiritual principle.

We are now living in days which are not dissimilar to those of our earliest fathers in the faith. There is widespread religious indifference and a vast amount of religious

formalism. The need for revival in the form of a renewal of vital Christianity is widely felt. So far as the younger generation is concerned nothing moves it so powerfully as the appeal for a vital, positive and self-sacrificing religion. It is this which accounts for the success among young people in Germany and Switzerland of the Barthian theology, and it is this, too, which lends attraction to the Group Movement in this country. It ought not to be forgotten that Congregationalism, by its very essence, is qualified and indeed professes to do exactly what these movements claim. It still stands for vital, primitive Christianity, and for that liberty in the Gospel which makes it possible for men and women to meet the challenge and follow the lead of the Spirit of God mediated in and through Jesus Christ. It may be that in the past we have been so busy with the work of organization as sometimes to have obscured our original root principles. The Centenary should offer us a real opportunity of recalling attention to these and of imparting our witness to the present generation with the fervour, directness and self-sacrifice of our fathers of old. Dr. Dale used to claim that Congregationalism was worth dying for. No one who realizes what it truly is would hesitate to make the same claim. That, however, is in virtue of its spiritual essence and not so much of its outward form. As John Owen said long ago:

Would Christians of all parties make it their business to retrieve its reputation, wherein also their own principles and happiness is involved, by a universal obedience to the precepts of it, it would sink a thousand of their differences underground. Were this attended to, the old, glorious, beautiful face of Christianity would be restored to it again.

If the Centenary can help us to use the strength of organized Congregationalism for this work of restoration it will not have been held in vain. Such a task too may well appeal to all that is best and bravest in the younger generation, which, whatever its faults, is always ready to respond to the spirit of adventure.—*Mansfield College, Oxford.*

## Church Union

[From 'For Times Like These', *the Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the United Church of Canada, 1931.*]

There are many movements these days in India towards Church Union. Certainly it seems absurd that with some six million Christians in a population of about 340,000,000 we should still stand apart when there is no cause of division that applies to Indian conditions. In South India, they have gone far in the drawing up of a Basis of Union that would be acceptable to Wesleyans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Episcopalians. There are still some snags in the way but they are determined to succeed. We have no work in that territory and so escape having to make up our minds whether to prefer disunion or to enter a Church that gives very much power into the hands of the bishop.

In North India, however, we are proceeding on a different line. Two Round Table Conferences have been held on Church Union in which the united Church of Northern India has taken a prominent part along with Methodist Episcopalians, Anglicans, Disciples, Quakers, Baptists, etc. These conferences are rather barren of definite results as yet but at least they bring the various Churches together where their viewpoints may be explained and prejudices overcome.

A more practical conference has been held between representatives of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the English Baptists and the united Church of Northern India. The first and the last have definitely agreed to seek Union and the Baptists are submitting the matter to their congregations. The proposed united Church would have general superintendents or bishops on the Methodist model but any idea of a separate order of the ministry is expressly disclaimed. This may militate against any union with the South in years to come but seems quite definitely the mind of our churches just now.

In all these meetings Rev. Dr. Yohan Masih, a member of our Mission (whose degree is from our own Pine Hill Divinity Hall, Halifax,) has taken a leading part. He has the unique distinction of having been moderator of every grade of court in the Indian Church—Session, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. At the present time he is secretary of the three higher courts, which is surely a record for one who is still young in the ministry. Our Mission may be proud of having two such outstanding Indian Christian leaders as Yohan Masih and John Netram to represent them in the building up of the Indian Church.

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## Old Catholics

(From 'The Church Times', London)

The leaders of extreme Protestantism in the Church are apparently both surprised and shocked to discover that Old Catholics are Catholic as well as old. Mr. Gilpin, one of the most persistent of the Protestant speakers in the Church Assembly, has been on holiday in Holland, and has visited the Old Catholic Cathedral in Utrecht. He was comforted by the assurance that Old Catholics do not 'adore' images or insist on Confession, and he was delighted to learn that they consider Anglo-Catholics 'more Papal than the Pope.' Nevertheless, Mr. Gilpin left Utrecht with grave misgiving. The Old Catholics are a small body. They have everything to gain by union with the Church of England. 'But Evangelicals will need to watch the proposals to this end very carefully indeed, for in the process they may find that, as members of

the Church of England, they have been committed to a doctrine of the Holy Communion which presents little difference from that of Transubstantiation.' There is, of course, vital difference between Transubstantiation and the doctrine of the Real Presence held by Old Catholics and English Churchmen. But it is quite true that the reunion of the two communions, which may, in the Providence of God, be effected next month in Vienna, will imply the formal recognition as legitimate of a doctrine, rejected by Mr. Gilpin and his friends, but which the Church of England has never lost. It is also true, as the Nonconformists recognize, and both Dr. Headlam and Dr. Bell fail to see, that reunion with the Old Catholics and the Orthodox must make reunion with the Protestant sects a far more remote danger.



## Reunion *via* 'Catholicity'

(From 'The Christian World', London)

Reunion—in the sense of mutual 'recognition' and intercommunion—has been achieved as between the Church of England and the Old Catholics whose centre is the See of Utrecht. The Commission which met at Bonn in July has issued its report, and all that remains is for the respective Convocations and Synods of the two Churches to ratify the terms of agreement. The findings of the Bonn Conference are as follows:—

1. Each communion recognizes the catholicity and independence of the other and maintains its own.

2. Each communion agrees to admit members of the other Communion to participate in the Sacraments.

3. Intercommunion does not require from either communion the acceptance of all doctrinal opinion, sacramental devotion, or liturgical practice characteristic of the other, but implies that each believes the other to hold all the essentials of the Christian faith.

One of the Anglican delegation, Canon G. F. Graham-Brown, Principal of Wycliffe Hall,

is a leading Evangelical, and he has deemed it advisable to make a written statement justifying his concurrence in these findings. Reunion, he declares, cannot be brought about on the basis of identity of doctrine without a change of doctrine by one or other, of the Churches. Evangelicals, however, may be prepared to agree that there is nothing in the Declaration of Utrecht (the doctrinal basis of the Old Catholic Church) which need be an impediment to intercommunion. He is willing to concede intercommunion on the principle of the Apostolic greeting: 'Peace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness.' Free Church Evangelicals will say Amen very heartily to that; but they cannot fail to note that the basis of the Bonn agreement is a mutual recognition of 'catholicity'—implying, presumably, episcopacy and the Apostolic Succession—and they are bound to recognize that such agreements must tend to retard rather than to hasten unity as between the Church of England and the 'non-catholic' Free Churches.

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## Church Union

### Important Step taken in Colombo

(From 'The Times of Ceylon')

'Churches in other parts of the world are engaged at the present time, holding Conferences and Committees, negotiating terms of Church Union, but this meeting today has made certain decisions which are most important and of far-reaching consequences. These decisions when put into action will bear powerful testimony to the underlying unity of the Christian Churches. They will help mutual understanding, and make Church Union easy in Ceylon.' These were the concluding remarks of the Chairman of the meeting held in All Saints' Church School Hall, Hultsdorf.

There were present ministers and laymen belonging to the Tamil Churches connected with the Anglican, Wesleyan, Presbyterian and Baptist Missions. The Rev. J. S. Mather, of the Wesleyan Mission, presided.

The Chairman said that a Union like the one they proposed to form was a great need in Colombo and would prove a great blessing. He said there were activities in which they could all unite. Each Church had its own open air meetings, but at regular intervals they could all unite and hold united open air meetings. The same could be done as regards

their weekly prayer meetings in the churches and the Evangelistic meetings in the schools. Each church in addition to its own meetings could have united meetings monthly and quarterly.

Mr. J. C. Joshua said that they should have annual conventions for the deepening of spiritual life. The Rev. S. S. Richard, the Rev. C. C. I. Abraham, the Rev. L. N. Hitchcock, Mr. G. W. Selvadurai, and Mr. J. C. V. Rutnam supported the suggestions made by Rev. Mr. Mather and Mr. Joshua.

The meeting resolved unanimously to form a union with these objects, and it was decided to call it the 'Colombo Christian Union'.

Mr. J. C. V. Rutnam was of opinion that the Union should be a union of all the Churches in Colombo,—Sinhalese, Tamil, and English.

The meeting, however, decided that it was best to make a small beginning, and that for the present the work should be confined to the Tamil and Malayalam Churches.

The affairs of the Society, it was decided, were to be managed by a Committee composed of delegates from the several congregations, and all clergymen in charge of them

would be ex-officio members of the Committee.

Each congregation will be entitled to send one delegate for every hundred members or part of it.

The following special activities were decided upon:—

(i) That on the first Wednesday of every month, united open air meetings be held in rotation in different centres.

(ii) That in the week following the third Sunday of each month united prayer meetings be held in rotation in the different churches.

(iii) That once a quarter Evangelistic meetings be held in the different schools, simultaneously in as many centres as possible, and in each meeting there be speakers from the different missions.

(iv) That an annual convention be held for the deepening of spiritual life.

## Church Union in South India

(From 'The Methodist Recorder')

*The Rev. J. S. M. Hooper, M.A., Conventor of the Wesleyan section, Joint Committee on Union in South India, writes:—*

The letter in your last issue from my friend, the Rev. E. L. Ananta Rao, of Hyderabad, is very interesting, but may perhaps lead to a misunderstanding of the situation in South India if some of his statements are allowed to pass without comment. He expresses dissatisfaction with the Conference's attitude and appears to suggest that Conference was not aware of the doubts and fears with reference to the Scheme of Union that are felt by himself and some of his friends. Had Mr. Ananta Rao himself been in Conference he could not but have been satisfied with the statement of those misgivings presented by his own Chairman, Mr. Posnett. But I should like to make one or two comments on the main matter of Mr. Ananta Rao's letter.

There is no justification for his statement that 'a great majority of the Indian Christians are opposed to the Scheme of Union on the basis of Episcopacy.' As he himself acknowledges in a later part of his letter, most of our Indian Christians know little or nothing about it; and, drawn as they are chiefly from the Depressed classes, only just emerging from darkness and ignorance into the light of the Gospel of Christ, there is no reason why they should be troubled with the technicalities of a discussion which could only confuse them. The outstanding fact for them, in such a mass movement area as that in which Mr. Ananta Rao is working with such conspicuous devotion, is that they are Christians; they are Wesleyan Christians because they happen to belong to a section of the country which is the sphere of Wesleyan activities; if they had lived in an adjoining area, they would have been Anglicans or Baptists; but from their standpoint, the overwhelmingly significant fact is their new connection with our Lord Jesus Christ, which is real and vital, no matter to which part of the Church they may owe their introduction to Him.

The Quarterly Meetings in the various circuits of the South Indian Provincial area, representing as far as is possible the member-

ship of the Church, will in due time have the Scheme of Union officially sent down to them for their consideration. This has not yet been done, as the Provincial Synod recognises that a much fuller knowledge of the Scheme is necessary if a really intelligent discussion is to take place in the Quarterly Meetings, and steps have been taken to lead to such study of the Scheme as will make plain the issues involved.

The Provincial Synod in South India, which fully represents our Indian Church, has discussed the scheme at great length, and after receiving the reports of the debates in the various District Synods and giving the fullest opportunity for the expression of every criticism, in January last it *unanimously* resolved to continue the consultations on Church Union on the basis of the present Scheme, which, of course, includes Episcopacy.

In Mr. Ananta Rao's references to Episcopacy there seems to be some confusion of thought. As Wesleyan Methodists, we can have no objection on grounds of principle to Episcopacy, regarded as a method of Church government. We make no secret of the fact that we strongly disagree with some of the theories of Episcopacy that are current; and on that the Scheme of Union is perfectly explicit—there is no hint of compromise of principle. But the chief objection that Mr. Ananta Rao raises is with regard to an exclusiveness that is certainly not necessarily involved in Episcopacy, and that is to be found in some branches of the Church to which the name of bishop is anathema. Now, from the Wesleyan standpoint one of the great attractions of the Scheme is that we are to deliver our great Sister Church of the Anglicans from that exclusiveness, which is to us so serious a defect. It cannot be too clearly stated that the united Church, as such, will be as catholic in its attitude to all Christians as the Wesleys now are. By entering into this Union we not only ourselves come into the fellowship of the Lord's Supper with our Anglican brethren of the united Church, but all Christians who now are welcomed to the Lord's Table in a Wesleyan



Chapel will be equally welcomed in any Church of the united Church—whether before Union it has been Wesleyan, Anglican, Congregational, or Presbyterian. When we have it in our power to bring our own freedom in this matter into the life of another great branch of the Church which at present has not realised its privilege, we surely incur a grave responsibility for perpetuating their exclusiveness if we refuse to consummate the Union which will bring about that change.

Mr. Ananta Rao is not correct in his suggestion that the scheme is not Indian. Its genesis was Indian, as a reference to the Foreword of the Scheme will show, and in the framing of it men of all races have worked together in the fullest harmony. The Church will be independent of all foreign control; it will be for it in the years to come to take shape under the moulding hand of God's Spirit in accordance with the needs of India, without any kind of dictation from abroad.

Were it true, as Mr. Ananta Rao suggests, that the proposed basis of Union is merely one of organisation, few of us would be prepared

to waste our time on it. The fact is that the basis of all our discussions has been spiritual fellowship; in it we have discovered our fundamental unity in our experience of Christ; we have been led to desire together to explore His unsearchable riches; and the way to which we have been pointed is the way of Union. For many years we have been drawing closer together in co-operative effort on the mission-field, and all our co-operation is to the good. But no co-operation or federation of itself is enough. We would remove all the barriers that hinder the full and open expression of our oneness; and for more effective service, for the removal of the scandal of division, for the liberating of the transforming energies of the Spirit of God through His one Body, the Church, we seek to fulfil the prayer of our Lord—'that they all may be one.' Surely it is not a movement for Union that needs to justify itself; it is the perpetuation, and thereby the strengthening and hardening of existing divisions that needs to be put on its defence.

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